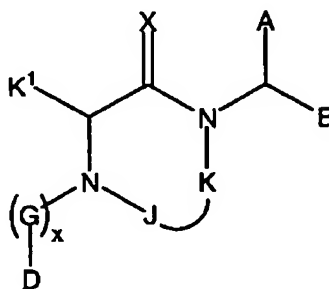


IN THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims herein will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A compound of formula (I):



(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, wherein:

A and B are independently selected from $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$ or $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$;

wherein E is phenyl, furyl, thienyl, pyridyl, pyrrolyl, oxazolyl, thiazolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, isoxazolyl, triazolyl, oxadiazolyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl, indolyl, isoindolyl, benzimidazolyl, benzothiofenyl, quinolinyl, isoquinolinyl, and benzothiazolyl;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO_3H , trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_2-C_6) -straight or branched alkenyl, $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkyl], $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_3-\text{C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkenyl], $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{NH}(\text{R}^4)-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{N}(\text{R}^4-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z})(\text{R}^5-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z})$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{O}-\text{Z}$, $\text{S}-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $\text{CH}=\text{CH}-\text{Z}$, 1,2-methylenedioxy, $\text{C}(\text{O})\text{OH}$, $\text{C}(\text{O})\text{O}-[(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkyl], $\text{C}(\text{O})\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$ or $\text{C}(\text{O})-\text{N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$;

wherein each of R^4 and R^5 are independently hydrogen, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_3-C_5) -straight or branched alkenyl, or wherein R^4 and R^5 , when bound to the same nitrogen atom, are taken together with the nitrogen atom to form a 5 or 6 membered ring, wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from N, O or S; wherein said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl groups in R_4 and R_5 are optionally substituted with Z.

each n is independently 0 to 4;

each Z is independently selected from a saturated, partially saturated or unsaturated, monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in Z are optionally and independently replaced with halo, hydroxy, nitro, cyano, C(O)OH, (C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, O-(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], amino, NH[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], or N-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl]₂;

K¹ is selected from hydrogen, E, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, wherein 1 to 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl is optionally and independently replaced with E;

wherein K¹ is optionally substituted with up to 3 substituents selected from halogen, OH, O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, NO₂, CO₂H, C(O)-O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, C(O)NR⁴R⁵, NR⁴R⁵ and (CH₂)_n-Z;

J and K, taken together with the two nitrogens that they are attached to, form a 6 membered piperazine

G, when present, is -S(O)₂-, -C(O)-, -S(O)₂-Y-, -C(O)-Y-, -C(O)-C(O)-, or -C(O)-C(O)-Y-;

Y is oxygen, or N(R⁶);

wherein R⁶ is hydrogen, E, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl;

D is (C₁-C₇)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₇)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, (C₅-C₇)-cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl optionally substituted with (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl or (C₂-C₇)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, [(C₁-C₇)-alkyl]-E, or [(C₂-C₇)-alkenyl or alkynyl]-E, or

D is an aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 2 of the CH₂ groups of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl chains in D is optionally replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, or -N(R³);

$x = 0$ or 1 ; and

$X = O$ or two hydrogens attached to ring carbon.

2. (previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein:

each of A and B is independently selected from $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$ or $-\text{CH}_2-$

$\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$; and

E is phenyl;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO_3H , trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_2-C_6) -straight or branched alkenyl, $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkyl], $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_3-\text{C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkenyl], $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{NH}(\text{R}^4)-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{N}(\text{R}^4-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z})(\text{R}^5-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z})$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{O}-\text{Z}$, $\text{S}-(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, $\text{CH}=\text{CH}-\text{Z}$, 1,2-methylenedioxy, $\text{C}(\text{O})\text{OH}$, or $\text{C}(\text{O})-\text{N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$.

3. (canceled).

4. (previously presented) The compound according to claim 2, wherein D is substituted phenyl.

5. (previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein K^1 is selected from E, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_2-C_6) -straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, wherein 1 to 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl is optionally and independently replaced with E;

wherein K^1 is substituted with up to 3 substituents selected from halogen, OH, O- (C_1-C_6) -alkyl, O- $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$, NO_2 , CO_2H , $\text{C}(\text{O})-\text{O}-(\text{C}_1-\text{C}_6)$ -alkyl, $\text{C}(\text{O})\text{NR}^4\text{R}^5$, NR^4R^5 and $(\text{CH}_2)_n-\text{Z}$.

6. (previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein each of A and B is independently selected from $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$ or $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{E}$; and

E is pyridyl.

7. (previously presented) A composition comprising a compound according to claim 1 and a carrier.
8. (canceled).
9. (canceled).
10. (canceled).
11. (currently amended) A method for stimulating neuronal regeneration or treating ~~preventing~~ neuronal damage or neurodegeneration in a patient or in an *ex vivo* nerve cell, comprising the step of administering to said patient or said nerve cell a therapeutically effective amount of compound according to any one of claims 1-6.
12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein said compound is administered to a patient in a therapeutically effective amount and is formulated together with a pharmaceutically suitable carrier into a pharmaceutically acceptable composition.
13. (canceled).
14. (canceled).
15. (canceled).
16. (canceled).
17. (canceled).
18. (canceled).

19. (canceled).

20. (canceled).